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EXECUTIVE SECRETARIAT

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Remarks

Executive Secretary

16 Aug 85

Date

3637 (10-81)

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THE WHITE HOUSE

WASHINGTON

August 18, 1985

Dear Bill:

Although I cannot be with you in person today, I did not want to miss the opportunity to join in honoring the people who have participated in Project CORONA for the past 25 years.

No words can adequately convey the respect and gratitude that I feel, and I am sure that all Americans would feel if they could know, of the dedication and selflessness of the people who have given so much to the security of the United States.

Through their work, I can request photographs of almost any area of the surface of the earth and have them in my hands in a matter of hours. It is a feat of which President Eisenhower and those before him could only dream. It was he who played the crucial role in the development of overhead reconnaissance. It was his commitment to and understanding of the vital contribution that reconnaissance could make to our nation's security that provided the impetus to this project 25 years ago.

During the Eisenhower Administration, a new generation of photo-reconnaissance technology was developed that radically changed the entire concept of intelligence gathering. Improved collection -- from reconnaissance balloons to satellites -- has resulted in our acquiring an ever-increasing volume of detailed intelligence crucial to our national security and that of our allies.

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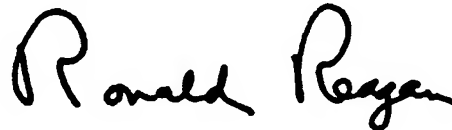
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President Eisenhower once said to the grand old man of this business, General George Goddard, that without aerial reconnaissance: "...you would only have your fears on which to plan your own defense arrangements and your whole military establishment. Now, if you are going to use nothing but fear, ...you are going to make us an armed camp." His statement is no less true today. The knowledge which only overhead reconnaissance can provide is absolutely vital to the security of the United States.

I know that if President Eisenhower could see the fruition of his dream he would feel the same pride and admiration that I do for the people of Project CORONA and join me in extending to them heartfelt thanks for their service and dedication to our country.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink, reading "Ronald Reagan". The signature is written in a cursive, flowing style with a large initial "R".

The Honorable William J. Casey
Director of Central Intelligence
Central Intelligence Agency
Washington, D.C. 20505

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EXECUTIVE SECRETARIAT
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Remarks

3637 (10-81)

Executive Secretary

31 Jul 85

Date

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Washington, D. C. 20505

Executive Registry

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31 July 1985

The Honorable Donald T. Regan
Chief of Staff and Assistant to
the President
The White House
Washington, D.C. 20500

Dear Don,

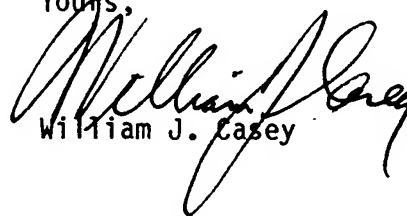
On 18 August 1985, about 100 space pioneers who participated in developing the first orbiting intelligence satellite will be honored at our Headquarters with a medallion celebrating the 25th Anniversary of the recovery of the first photographic film received from space.

In addition to the pioneers, another 300 people engaged in building and operating today's far more sophisticated intelligence satellites will be in attendance--US Government officials, scientists, and people associated with the corporations building our satellites.

Because these programs remain classified, we cannot draw public attention to this commemoration. For this reason it would not be prudent for Vice President Bush to attend the ceremony. However, it would be great to have those attending the commemoration view a recorded personal message of two minutes or so from the President on film.

I enclose a draft of remarks that might be suitable for the occasion.

Yours,


William J. Casey

Enclosure:
As stated

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Speech by
RONALD REAGAN
for the
25th Anniversary of Project CORONA

Although it's not possible for me to deliver this message personally, this anniversary is of such significance that I felt I must tell you in some manner how we, as a nation, appreciate the task you accomplished a quarter century ago.

Today, as your President, I can request that photographs be taken of almost any area on the surface of this planet and have those pictures in my hands within a few hours. Had I been President twenty-five years ago, this would have been impossible. What made this possible was the hard work and dedication of those who are being honored today.

Because you developed these capabilities secretly within the tightest security, the only recognition you received was the knowledge that you had contributed substantially to our nation's safety during a very dangerous period. Although we must still work within security constraints, we hope in some measure today to redress that long-standing lack of recognition for your achievements.

I would also like to honor that distinguished predecessor of mine, President Dwight Eisenhower, who played a crucial role in the development of overhead reconnaissance. His understanding of the vital contribution that reconnaissance could make our nation's security, like your contributions, has also been hidden from public view.

During his Administration a new generation of photo-reconnaissance technology was developed that radically changed the entire concept of intelligence collection. Improved collection

vehicles -- first reconnaissance balloons, then high-altitude aircraft, and finally satellites -- resulted in our acquiring an ever-increasing volume of detailed intelligence.

The development of these systems produced radical innovations, both in the technical systems themselves and in the decision to use them in clandestine flights over foreign territories. The risks of detection were great and the political repercussions -- both domestic and international -- that were sure to follow detection were serious. Despite these risks, President Eisenhower decided that to provide for our common defense, this nation needed up-to-date military intelligence from behind the Iron Curtain. It was this policy objective, essential for the security of the republic, that justified the political risks inherent in using these new means of reconnaissance. In retrospect, we now recognize that the dangerous route chosen by Eisenhower to seek the truth through photo reconnaissance was the only plausible and rational way to uncover and assess the Soviet Union's military and industrial capabilities.

President Eisenhower once remarked to General George Goddard, the grand old man of this business, that without aerial reconnaissance: ". . . you would only have your fears on which to plan your own defense arrangements and your whole military establishment. Now, if you are going to use nothing but fear, . . . you are going to make us an armed camp." This is no less true today than in President Eisenhower's time, and I reaffirm his conclusion that the knowledge which only overhead reconnaissance can provide is absolutely vital for the United States.

The Iron Curtain remains a challenge. And we, as a nation, continue to rely on the cooperation among academia, industry, and government to develop new systems for overcoming this unnatural barrier.

I'm sure that if President Eisenhower were here today to see what you have achieved from the programs begun as a result of his decisions he would express a hearty "well done!" America is safer for your work, and I congratulate each of you for so fully earning the gratitude of your countrymen by your remarkable achievements during a long period of continuing peril.

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The Deputy Director of Central Intelligence

Washington D C 20505

1 July 1985

MEMORANDUM FOR: Deputy Director, National Reconnaissance Office

SUBJECT: 25TH Anniversary of Satellite Reconnaissance

REFERENCE: Your Memo dtd 25 Jun 85; Same Subject

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Jimmy,

As I noted in our conversation, it will be very difficult to have the Vice President come out here for the 25th Anniversary and have it remain a secret. I am confident that it would not take too long before the purpose and reason for his visit became known. Accordingly, if you do want to keep it a secret, I suggest that you pick another keynote speaker such as Richard Bissell, who was the first to head up our satellite reconnaissance effort.


John N. McMahon

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TOP SECRET **NATIONAL RECONNAISSANCE OFFICE**

WASHINGTON, D.C.

25 June 1985

OFFICE OF THE DEPUTY DIRECTOR


MEMORANDUM FOR DIRECTOR OF CENTRAL INTELLIGENCE

SUBJECT: 25TH Anniversary of Satellite Reconnaissance

We are progressing with the plans to commemorate the twenty-fifth anniversary of imaging satellite reconnaissance. Our plans are to hold the affair at CIA Headquarters on Sunday, August 18, 1985 from 1300-1700. There will be a one-hour formal program in the Presentation Center followed by an informal reception. Due to the capacity constraints of the Presentation Center, we intend to limit attendance to 475 which includes approximately 100 pioneers--those men and women who made major contributions to the success of the first imaging satellite reconnaissance mission. Because there were a great many individuals who made major contributions, we intend to acknowledge all pioneers and present them with a suitable memento rather than identify and award only a select few.

The formal program will include a summary of the history of satellite reconnaissance and an update on the current technologies. The program would conclude with a keynote address. While there are a number of possible candidates, I believe the Vice President would be the ideal choice. If you concur, please sign the attached letter to Mr. Bush.

Attachment
Proposed Ltr to
Vice President

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